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Demarcation of wards in Panchayats.

* 165 *Q.*—SRI V. SRI KRISHNA : Will the Hon. the Minister for Local Administration be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether the demarcation of wards in panchayats is made after due consultation with the concerned panchayat boards;

(*b*) whether there is any prior publication of the matter in the Gazette so as to elicit the opinion of the villagers;

(*c*) whether the Government have received any complaints in this regard; and

(*d*) if so, the action the Government have taken or propose to take thereon?

THE HON. SRI N. SANKARA REDDI :—" (*a*) Yes.

" (*b*) No, as Section 9 (1) of the Madras Village Panchayats Act 1950, contemplates only consultation with panchayats in the matter."

" (*c*) Yes; in some individual cases.

" (*d*) These complaints have been transferred to the Inspector of Municipal Councils and Local Boards for necessary action as he is vested with powers under the Act to deal with questions relating to ward divisions."

SRI V. SRI KRISHNA :—" Will the Government now at least consider the desirability of publishing it in the Gazette to elicit public opinion so as to make any amendment that may be required? "

THE HON. SRI N. SANKARA REDDI :—" I am afraid the Act does not contemplate such notification; only consultation is prescribed."

SRI K. SUBBA REDDI :—" Will the Government be able to give an assurance that all eligible voters will be enrolled before the ensuing local board elections and is it a fact that the Government are delaying the elections in order to save their face from impending defeat? "

THE HON. SRI N. SANKARA REDDI :—" No delay is made in conducting elections to the panchayats and municipal councils."

SRI M. NARAYANASWAMI :—" May I know, Sir, whether the elections would be held only for the existing boards or will the villages be split up as per the Panchayat Act and then fresh elections ordered? "

THE HON. SRI N. SANKARA REDDI :—" The elections are being conducted only for the existing panchayats."

SRI C. V. K. RAO :—" May I know what the policy underlying the demarcation is? Is it to increase or decrease the number of wards? "

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THE HON. SRI N. SANKARA REDDI :—" According to the Act, I think second-class panchayats are being demarcated into wards only now."

SRI M. HANUMANTHA RAO :—" Do the Government propose to hold the elections on the basis of adult franchise according to the Panchayat Act? "

MR. SPEAKER :—" The present question relates only to the demarcation of wards. I have, however, no objection if the Hon. Minister is prepared to answer."

THE HON. SRI N. SANKARA REDDI :—" Certainly, Sir."

SRI M. S. MOGRAL :—" May I know if the Government propose to conduct elections to minor panchayats by the show of hands and if so, do not the Government think that this method of election would cause bitterness and factions in the villages? "

MR. SPEAKER :—" I wish to remind the hon. Member that this question deals with demarcation of wards and has nothing to do with elections. The hon. Member may put a separate question."

Non-payment of full wages to the workers engaged in Famine Relief Works.

* 166 Q.—SRI T. NAGI REDDI : Will the Hon. the Minister for Land Revenue be pleased to state whether the Government have received any complaints about the non-payment of full wages to workers by the contractors engaged in public works opened for famine relief, and, if so, the action taken thereon? "

THE HON. SRI M. A. MANICKAVELU NAICKER :—" Yes. The Government examined the complaints in consultation with the Collectors of season-affected districts and the Famine Commissioner. They ordered departmental execution of works. Where, however, works are to be executed through contractors, instructions have been issued to ensure that at least $87\frac{1}{2}$ per cent of the estimate is paid out as wages."

SRI T. NAGI REDDI :—" May I know the number of complaints the Government have received, the number of complaints that the Government have disposed of and the number of contractors on whom the Government have taken action in view of the fact that there has been great dissatisfaction in the districts where the contractors have been asked to take up famine works? "

MR. SPEAKER :—" The hon. Member has clubbed three questions into one supplementary question."

THE HON. SRI M. A. MANICKAVELU NAICKER :—" I am sorry I cannot tell the number without notice. As for the complaints, I have gone into them and as a result of enquiries, departmental execution of works has been ordered."